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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 04 BOGOTA 012689

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [SNAR](#) [MASS](#) [PREF](#) [EAID](#) [KJUS](#) [CO](#)

SUBJECT: PLAN COLOMBIA IMPLEMENTATION ROUND-UP, NOVEMBER 2004

Classified By: Ambassador William B. Wood for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

1. (U) The following is an update of Plan Colombia-related activities reported during November 2004.

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DOJ/JSRP  
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2. (U) The Justice Sector Reform Program (JSRP) coordinated several training courses during November. They included the following: "Investigator as a Witness" (in Bogota, Medellin, Cali, Bucaramanga, Pereira, Tunja and Manizales); "Criminal Trial Advocacy" Judge's Training" (in Bogota for 40 judges); "Criminal Trial Advocacy" (two courses in Bogota for 120 prosecutors and 60 investigators); "Police Discipline, Ethics, and Transparency" (in Bucaramanga for 40 Police Commanders); an "Expert Witness Course" (in Bogota for 20 laboratory forensic examiners); and a "Train the Trainer" course (in Bogota for 35 potential new prosecutors/instructors of the Criminal Trial Advocacy program).

3. (U) JSRP also coordinated an observational visit to U.S. Courts in Washington D.C. for 12 prosecutors and one judge; set up an oral trial presentation and simulation at the Twelfth National Congress of Legal Medicine and Forensic Science for 200 forensic experts and medical examiners; sent 4 Colombian justice officials to the DOJ Cyber Crime Regional Workshop in Lima, Peru; and completed a one-week expert evaluation of the status of Colombia's evidence rooms and evidence procedures.

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DOJ/ICITAP  
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4. (U) During the week of November 1, ICITAP sponsored the visit of chief medical examiners from Wayne County, Michigan, and Cook County, Illinois. They gave presentations at the 12th Annual Forensic Science Conference on the role of the medical examiner's office in the accusatory justice system. The presentations included a "mock trial" practical exercise.

5. (U) In November, ICITAP provided the equipment and technical assistance to start a wireless fingerprint network within and between the National Police - DIJIN and the Institute for Legal Medicine. The network will allow investigators at a crime scene to send fingerprints obtained at the scene via a wireless transmission to the Police Fingerprint Archive. The Institute can now also wirelessly transmit the fingerprints of unidentified cadavers to the Police Fingerprint Archive for possible identification. The system should reduce the time for fingerprint examinations, especially in critical cases involving human rights abuses and violent crimes.

6. (U) In November, ICITAP conducted "Investigator as a Witness" training for all Judicial Police Investigators in Armenia, Quindio Department. So far this year, ICITAP has trained 385 Judicial Police Investigators. In December, ICITAP will complete training in Pereira, Risaralda Department, and Manizales, Caldas Department. The training is designed to help the Judicial Police transition to the accusatory system of justice that will be implemented in Bogota, Armenia, Pereira, and Manizales in January 2005.

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MILGROUP  
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7. (C) Colombian Military Commander General Ospina said that following changes among the Flag-Grade Officers he will establish a joint command on the north coast consisting of the First Division, Caribbean fleet assets, Combatant Air Commands, and riverine elements. The command will be led by an army commander, probably the division commander. General Ospina is also planning to create three joint entities in the capital region: a joint intelligence command, a joint MEDEVAC/Combat Search and Rescue (CSAR) unit, and the Joint Special Operations Command. He will name a General Officer to head each organization and is considering appointing General Freddy Padilla de Leon as their first line reporting General Officer. Ospina will staff the joint Special

Operations Command with one General Officer, three colonels, five lieutenant colonels, and 13 other officers and non-commissioned officers. The command will be located on the grounds of the Infantry or Cavalry School.

18. (C) Brigadier General Gustavo Matamoros Camacho said that Civil Affairs/PSYOPS activities are beginning to change civilian perceptions of the military throughout Arauca. Support actions by battalion commanders, such as Lieutenant Colonel Francisco Medina Corredor in Saravena, are gaining a civilian support base. Activities like Medical Readiness Training exercises, soccer games/tournaments sponsored by and on military installations, children's activities and parties, and radio broadcasts and military-civilian contact are beginning to show results. The mayor of Saravena, who won the election while jailed under suspicion of being a member of the ELN, is now working closely with Lt. Col. Medina to affect change with the population of Saravena. The efforts of the deployed Special Forces Operation Detachment Alpha in assisting with recent activities were highlighted by both BGen Matamoros and Lt. Col. Medina as being force multipliers. BGen Matamoros has forged a strong relationship with the Governor of Arauca and both realize that civil-military cooperation in Arauca is a long term project that must be sustained by the GOC and COLMIL. Discussions at the Second Division in Bucaramanga also indicated that the Information Operations campaign was as effective as military operations in neutralizing the influence of illegal armed groups.

19. (C) A COLAF commander signed a sole source justification letter to accompany a letter of request for pricing and availability on two C-130 aircraft for sale by Evergreen Aircraft Sales and Leasing Company. The paperwork was submitted via security assistance channels. The most effective method for the COLAF to acquire these systems is through security assistance funding and acquisition. A third-party company, Hoover Aviation, may purchase the C-130s, then perform maintenance/avionics upgrades, and re-sell them to the COLAF. This acquisition will increase the strategic lift fleet by 25 percent.

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NAS  
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110. (U) Asset forfeiture has long been a tortuously bureaucratic and ineffective process in Colombia, reserved only for the strongest cases against major narcotics traffickers. In a little-noticed September press conference in the Department of Santander, President Uribe announced that in cases involving the cultivation of illicit narcotics, asset seizure and forfeiture would be applied to small farms as well as large ones. Since that announcement, the Colombian National Police (CNP) have taken several steps to make the President's warning a reality. The CNP currently has plans to implement the asset forfeiture process as a potent complement to forced eradication.

111. (U) On November 24, the SIJIN (Judicial and Investigative Police) conducted a workshop on asset forfeiture and seizure to brief Boyaca municipal police units on legal requirements for building strong cases. These include firm identification of title and possession of the plot, proper chain of custody techniques for crop samples, testing by an established criminal laboratory, and coordination with several GOC agencies, including the Fiscalia, Direccion Nacional de Estupifacientes (DNE - Colombia's "Drug Czar" equivalent agency), and the Augustin Codazzi Geographic Institute. NAS is working with departmental police -- who are now manually eradicating coca in western Boyaca -- to start an asset forfeiture case in each coca-growing municipality. NAS and the CNP District Commander for the zone recently met with police units and local mayors to explain the program and NAS will soon be providing GPS units and other equipment to facilitate the process. GOC-led manual eradication projects underway in Llorente (Narino) and Orito (Putumayo) also plan to start at least one case in each area to alter the risk/reward ratio for illicit crop growers.

112. (U) Through leaflets and radio interviews, the CNP is spreading the word that land seizure awaits any who risk planting coca on their land. Examples of actual cases in each growing region will undoubtedly be the most effective force multiplier, and may even result in growers uprooting their own crops in advance of the arrival of law enforcement. Post has previously reported on the many drawbacks of manual eradication, which include hazardous, difficult working conditions and a tempo that is unable to outpace replanting. Post will encourage the GOC to incorporate an active, strategic asset forfeiture program into manual eradication programs so that the CNP garners some advantage from an inherently risky activity.

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RSO

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13. (U) VIP Personal Protection Program: Weapons for this program have been received and will be distributed to the personal protection details of the President, Vice President, Minister of Defense, and the Mayor of Bogota. Some will be held back for training purposes.

14. (U) Anti-Kidnapping Initiative: Ten persons assigned to GAULA units completed a two-week "train the trainer" course and will be assistant instructors when Crisis Response Training (CRT) commences in early January. Dates for the next CRT course have not been confirmed at this time, but it will probably take place in early January 2005.

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USAID

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15. (U) Ambassador Wood and Foreign Minister Barco formalized the FY04 obligation of USD 116.7 million in USAID humanitarian and socio-economic assistance. To date, the USG has allocated a total of USD 458 million, including USD 123 million to support a more responsive and accountable democracy, USD 206 million to promote economic and social alternatives to illicit crop production, and USD 129 million to provide economic and social opportunities to displaced persons and members of other vulnerable groups.

16. (U) Under its Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) program, USAID is assisting the Colombian government with the design of a contingency plan to support former child combatants in the event of large-scale demobilizations. Training for local authorities has been undertaken in eight municipalities and will eventually cover at least five additional localities. To date, USAID has assisted over 2,000 former child combatants through activities such as psychological counseling, education, and vocational skills development.

17. (U) USAID Alternative Development Program partner Land O' Lakes signed a grant agreement for USD 100,000 with a local cooperative, COLANTA, to establish milk collection centers (MCCs) in the municipalities of Yarumal, Valdivia, Briceno, Caceres, Taraza, and Caucasia in the Bajo Cauca region of the department of Antioquia. In the initial phase, 20 MCCs will be established with a daily average capacity of 750 liters each. Each tank will serve between two and ten producers on nearby farms. The average investment per MCC is USD 5,000, of which 80 percent will be financed directly by program beneficiaries through bank loans facilitated by the GOC's Agricultural and Livestock Financial Fund (FINAGRO). The remaining 20 percent will be financed with grant resources from USAID's Dairy Development Program.

WOOD